darkhorse
originals
2 OF 4
$3.50
RESET
BY PETER BAGGE

PREVIOUSLY, IN RESET #1...

RESET™

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THE VERY NEXT DAY...
WE'VE SETTLED ON A FEW NEW GROUND RULES, GUY...
UH-OH.
FIRST, YOU NEED TO STOP MOVING AROUND SO MUCH...
OKAY.
...SINCE YOU MIGHT DO SERIOUS DAMAGE TO THE EQUIPMENT...
GOT IT.
...SO WE'RE GOING TO STRAP YOU IN—
WHAT?!? NO WAY!!
ARE YOU NUTS?!
—EXCEPT FOR YOUR RIGHT ARM...
THAT WAY YOU CAN UNSTRAP YOURSELF...
IT'LL JUST TAKE YOU A WHILE...
YOU'RE TOO HERKY-JERKY...
WE DON'T KNOW HOW ELSE TO KEEP YOU STILL!
WHY IS TED ROLLING UP MY SLEEVES?

WE WANT TO PUT THE SENSORS DIRECTLY ONTO YOUR SKIN...
THAT WAY YOU'LL FEEL THINGS MORE INTENSELY.
I SEE...
SO THE NEXT TIME I'M PUNCHED IN THE FACE IT'LL REALLY HURT, IS THAT IT?
DON'T DO OR SAY ANYTHING THAT DESERVES A PUNCH AND YOU'LL BE FINE.
I'M APPLYING SOME TO YOUR FEET TOO, GUY.
SO FAR ALL THESE NEW GROUND RULES SUCK...
WHAT'S IN IT FOR ME?
WELL, YOU WON'T HAVE TO START AT THE SAME POINT ANYMORE, FOR ONE THING.
OH? SO YOU GOT SICK OF MY GRADUATION CEREMONY TOO, EH?
ERR... YES.
WHAT ABOUT MY IMPENDING "DATE" WITH GAIL MALONE? IS THAT OFF TOO?
NO. WE SAVED YOUR LAST EXCHANGE WITH HER...
UNLESS YOU WANT TO UN-ASK HER OUT, THAT IS.
NO! I'M LOOKING FORWARD TO IT!
IS THAT OUR NEW STARTING POINT?
NO. YOUR PARENTS ARE.
OH NO! WHERE? WHEN?!
RIGHT AFTER YOUR GRADUATION, THE SUMMER OF '85.
OH MAN...
AT LEAST WE WARNED YOU THIS TIME...
READY?
SURE, WHAT THE HELL...
THIS OUGHT TO BE A BLAST.
HOLD STILL. WE ADDED A CHIN STRAP AS WELL.

THERE IT IS. THE **OLD HOMESTEAD...**
IF THIS IS TRUE TO FORM, DAD WILL BE IN "HIS" CHAIR TO THE LEFT AS I **ENTER...**
...BINGO.
I'M GLAD YOU'RE HOME, SON. WE NEED TO **TALK.**
GUESS WHAT, DAD. I'VE GOT A **DATE!**
WITH A BLACK CHICK, NO LESS!
THIS IS NO TIME FOR **JOKES,** SON.
UH-OH. ARE WE GOING TO DISCUSS MY **FUTURE** AGAIN?
WELL, **YES,** BUT --
LOOK, MY AGREEING NOT TO GO TO ACTING SCHOOL DOES **NOT** MEAN I AGREED TO BE AN **ACCOUNTING MAJOR--**
I KNOW, AND THAT'S **FINE...**
IT'S JUST THAT, WELL...
MONEY MIGHT BE **TIGHT** AROUND HERE FOR A BIT...
YOU SEE, YOUR MA AND I ARE GETTING A **DIVORCE--**
OH NO! NOT **THIS** CONVERSATION!
GUY! WHERE ARE YOU OFF TO? I'M NOT **FINISHED!**
WHERE'S **MA?** I'VE GOTTA **TALK** TO HER!
OH, **HELLO,** GUY. I SUPPOSE YOUR FATHER TOLD Y--
MA! DON'T DO IT!
DON'T GET A DIVORCE! YOU'LL REGRET IT, **BELIEVE** ME!
THEN WHEN DAD GETS **SICK,** YOU'LL BLAME YOURSELF AND--

BZZT!
—HEY! WHAT GIVES?!
WHY'D IT STOP? I NEVER TOUCHED THE RESET BUTTON!
I STOPPED IT.
NEW RULE: NO MORE REVEALING FUTURE EVENTS TO PEOPLE FROM YOUR PAST.
WHY NOT? ISN'T THAT THE WHOLE POINT?
KNOWING THEN WHAT YOU KNOW NOW?
YES, BUT YOU'RE COMING OFF LIKE SOME TEENAGE NOSTRADAMUS.
YEAH, YOU SOUND LIKE A CRAZY SCHIZO!
THANKS FOR THE INPUT, TED.
ALL WE'RE SAYING IS TRY NOT TO TIP YOUR HAND SO MUCH...
WE WANT YOUR EXCHANGES TO AT LEAST SOUND PLAUSIBLE.
YOU KNOW WHAT? I'M STARTING TO THINK NEITHER OF YOU KNOW WHAT YOU'RE DOING...
THAT YOU'RE AS BEFUDDLED BY THIS NEW TECHNOLOGY AS I AM...
I, UH... YEAH, KINDA.
HERE'S A THOUGHT: HOW ABOUT WE TAKE A BREAK, AND THEN REAPPROACH THIS AS A TEAM...
A "TEAM"?
HOW LONG A BREAK? A WEEK? A MONTH?
I MEAN LIKE A LUNCH BREAK!
LET'S ALL GO EAT SOME-WHERE! MY TREAT!
HOW ABOUT IT?
WELL... I SUPPOSE...
YOU'RE ON, BIG SPENDER!

AND SO...
NOW THIS IS MORE LIKE IT, WOULDN'T YOU SAY?
WE'RE FINALLY SITTING DOWN AND GETTING TO KNOW EACH OTHER AS EQUALS!
I'D FEEL MORE "EQUAL" IF WE WENT TO A TACO BELL LIKE I WANTED TO.
WE NEVER TREATED YOU AS ANYTHING LESS THAN AN EQUAL, GUY.
FRIED CHICKEN
TRY OUR NEW DOUBLE TROUBLE SANDWICH!
THIS MONTH ONLY FREE REFILLS ON ALL LARGE SODAS
AU CONTRAIRE, ANGIE. YOU TREAT ME LIKE A LAB RAT...
AND THAT LAB COAT DOESN'T HELP MATTERS.
I TOLD YOU, THIS COAT IS A JOB REQUIREMENT.
SURE, IT'S TO GIVE YOU AN AIR OF AUTHORITY...
BUT IF IT REALLY WAS NECESSARY, WHY DOESN'T TED HAVE ONE?
HEY, THAT'S RIGHT! WHERE'S MY LAB COAT?
I DON'T MAKE THE RULES, GUY.
OH NO? COULDA FOOLED ME, THE WAY YOU'VE BEEN CHANGING ALL THE RULES BY THE MINUTE.
HE'S GOT A POINT, ANGIE...
TED! PLEASE!

HOW OLD ARE YOU?
WHO, ME?
WHAT'S THAT GOT TO DO WITH ANYTHING?
YOU SAID WE'RE ALL EQUALS, RIGHT?
YET YOU KNOW EVERYTHING ABOUT ME, WHILE I DON'T KNOW A THING ABOUT YOU—
:SIGH: FINE...
I'M TWENTY-SEVEN. HAPPY?
TWENTY-SEVEN?!? ARE YOU SERIOUS?
YOU MEAN I'VE BEEN TAKING ORDERS FROM SOMEONE TWO YEARS YOUNGER THAN ME?
WHAT DIFFERENCE DOES THAT MAKE?
YOU SAID YOU HAD A P.H.D. SO YOU JUST GRADUATED?
I GRADUATED LAST YEAR.
I SEE. A QUICK STUDY...
SO THIS IS YOUR FIRST "REAL" JOB, ISN'T IT?
SO WHAT?
OH MAN... I'M BEING BOSSED AROUND BY A CHILD...
I BET YOU ALWAYS GRADUATED AT THE TOP OF YOUR CLASS...
NOT ALWAYS!
HA! "NOT ALWAYS", SHE SAYS!
...AND YOU WENT INTO PSYCHOLOGY TO HELP PEOPLE, I ASSUME...
OF COURSE. WHAT'S WRONG WITH THAT?
NOTHING! ONLY I DOUBT YOUR EMPLOYEES ARE MOTIVATED BY ALTRUISM...
YET YOU KEEP TRYING TO CONVINCE YOURSELF OTHERWISE...
OR YOU'D NEVER BE ABLE TO GET UP IN THE MORNING, RIGHT?
UH, GUY...

SO I'M UP-SETTING HER. SO WHAT?
SHE NEVER LIKED ME ANYWAY, RIGHT?
GUY, REALLY, THAT'S ENOUGH...
I BET YOU DON'T THINK I'M THE LEAST BIT FUNNY...
I BET YOU HATED ALL MY MOVIES...
YOU'RE RIGHT! I DID HATE THEM!
I THINK THEY'RE GARBAGE!
WHOA! ANGIE!
WHAT WAS THAT ONE CALLED? "GOOD TIMES IN GARY, INDIANA"?
THE TITLE ALONE SHOULD'VE WARNED ME IT'D BE THE DUMBEST MOVIE EVER MADE!
LOOK OUT! ANGIE'S ON FIRE!
HEY, THAT'S FINE...
YOU'RE HARDLY ALONE IN YOUR OPINION...
STILL, YOU CHOSE ME FOR THIS PROJECT...
YET I'M SUPPOSED TO BELIEVE YOU HAVE MY BEST INTERESTS AT HEART...
YOU FIT THE CRITERIA.
IT'S IRRELEVENT WHETHER I "LIKE" YOU OR NOT.
THAT DOESN'T SOUND VERY REASSURING...
YOU'RE NOT MY PATIENT, GUY...
OR MY CLIENT, OR MY EMPLOYER...
CHOMP
I CAN SPEAK FREELY IF I CHOOSE TO.
BESIDES, YOU FORCED THE ISSUE...
TRUE ENOUGH. I ASKED FOR IT. I ADMIT IT.
SOMEONE REMIND ME: WHY ARE WE HERE?
PTUI!
UGH! THIS CHICKEN IS DISGUSTING!

TO ESTABLISH NEW GROUND RULES.
RIGHT. STARTING WITH NO MORE "GROUND RULES."
BUT—
NO MORE GROUND RULES!
ONCE WE GET BACK TO THE "OFFICE," I SAY WE LET 'ER RIP...
NO MORE DEBATING, NO MORE SECOND-GUESSING...
AND NO MORE HITTING THE RESET BUTTON!
THAT INCLUDES YOU TOO, ANGIE!
FINE. I'LL JUST GO WITH THE FLOW...
AND IF WE DON'T LIKE THE RESULTS WE'LL START FROM SCRATCH TOMORROW. SOUND GOOD?
WELL...
FINE BY ME.
OH, ALL RIGHT.
GOOD! IT'S SETTLED, THEN...
—OH, WAIT! WE NEVER HEARD TED'S STORY!
MY WHAT?
YOU KNOW, LIKE WHAT'S YOUR BACKGROUND AND INTERESTS...
MY "BACKGROUND"? I'M A COMPUTER NERD. WHAT ELSE DO YOU NEED TO KNOW?
WELL, WHAT KIND OF MUSIC DO YOU LIKE?
MUSIC?
YEAH, YOU KNOW, VARIOUS SOUNDS ARRANGED IN VARIOUS PATTERNS...
OH. WELL, I ALWAYS LIKED BON JOVI...
AND SOME OF DAVE MATTHEWS' EARLY STUFF —OOF!
SHOVE!
UGH! ENOUGH!
SORRY I ASKED!
I CAN JUST PICTURE YOUR APARTMENT: WHITE WALLS COVERED WITH FRAMED SCI-FI MOVIE POSTERS; BEIGE WALL-TO-WALL CARPETING...
WHAT'S WRONG WITH BEIGE CARPETING?
HA!
AH-HA! LOOK! I JUST MADE ANGIE LAUGH!
HMPF.
HMPF.

AND SO...
YOU SURE YOU WANT TO DO IT THIS WAY, GUY?
YUP.
THIS IS THE WAY IT'S SUPPOSED TO BE DONE, ISN'T IT?
"TOTAL IMMERSION" AND ALL THAT?
WELL, YES, BUT YOU USED TO BE SO SKITTISH ABOUT THIS...
HEY, DON'T KNOCK IT, ANGIE!
HE'S FINALLY BEING A GOOD LITTLE GUINEA PIG! RIGHT, GUY?
THAT'S RIGHT!
JUST REMEMBER THAT I'M PUTTING MY TOTAL TRUST IN YOU FROM NOW ON, ANGIE...
SO IF ANYTHING GOES WRONG IT'LL BE ON YOUR HEAD!
STRAP IN BOTH ARMS THIS TIME, TED.
WILL DO.
:GULP!:

...I DON'T KNOW **WHAT** I WANT...
THEN WHY TAKE THIS LEAP INTO THE **GREAT UNKNOWN?**
LEAVING DAD WON'T MAKE YOUR LIFE ANY **BETTER,** MA.
BUT YOUR FATHER WANTS A DIVORCE **AS WELL...**
SO AT LEAST **HE'LL** BE BETTER OFF.
HE'S JUST **RESIGNED** TO IT, IS ALL...
HE'S **GIVEN UP** TRYING TO MAKE YOU HAPPY...
OH DEAR...
PERHAPS I **AM** BEING TOO HASTY.
MAYBE I SHOULD **RE-CONSIDER...**
GOOD IDEA!
I'LL GO TALK TO **DAD** NOW...
LATER...
"CLINICAL DE-PRESSION"?
"EMPTY NEST SYNDROME"?
WHAT DOES **THAT** MEAN?
IT'S WHAT MOM'S **SUFFERING** FROM, DAD.
YET SHE'S **RE-CONSIDERING** THE DIVORCE, YOU SAY?
THAT'S WHAT SHE TOLD **ME!**
MAYBE YOU SHOULD GO ASK HER **YOURSELF.**
MAYBE I **SHOULD...**
LORD KNOWS I'M DREADING HAVING TO DO MY **OWN COOKING.**
BY THE WAY, DAD, WHEN WAS THE LAST TIME YOU HAD A **PHYSICAL EXAM?**
OH, IT'S BEEN A WHILE. **WHY?**
YOUR **SMOKER'S COUGH** HAS BEEN GETTING WORSE LATELY...
A **LOT** WORSE.
I HAVE A **"SMOKER'S COUGH"?**
I'LL MAKE AN **APPOINTMENT** FOR YOU. BETTER SAFE THAN **SORRY.**
IF YOU **INSIST...**

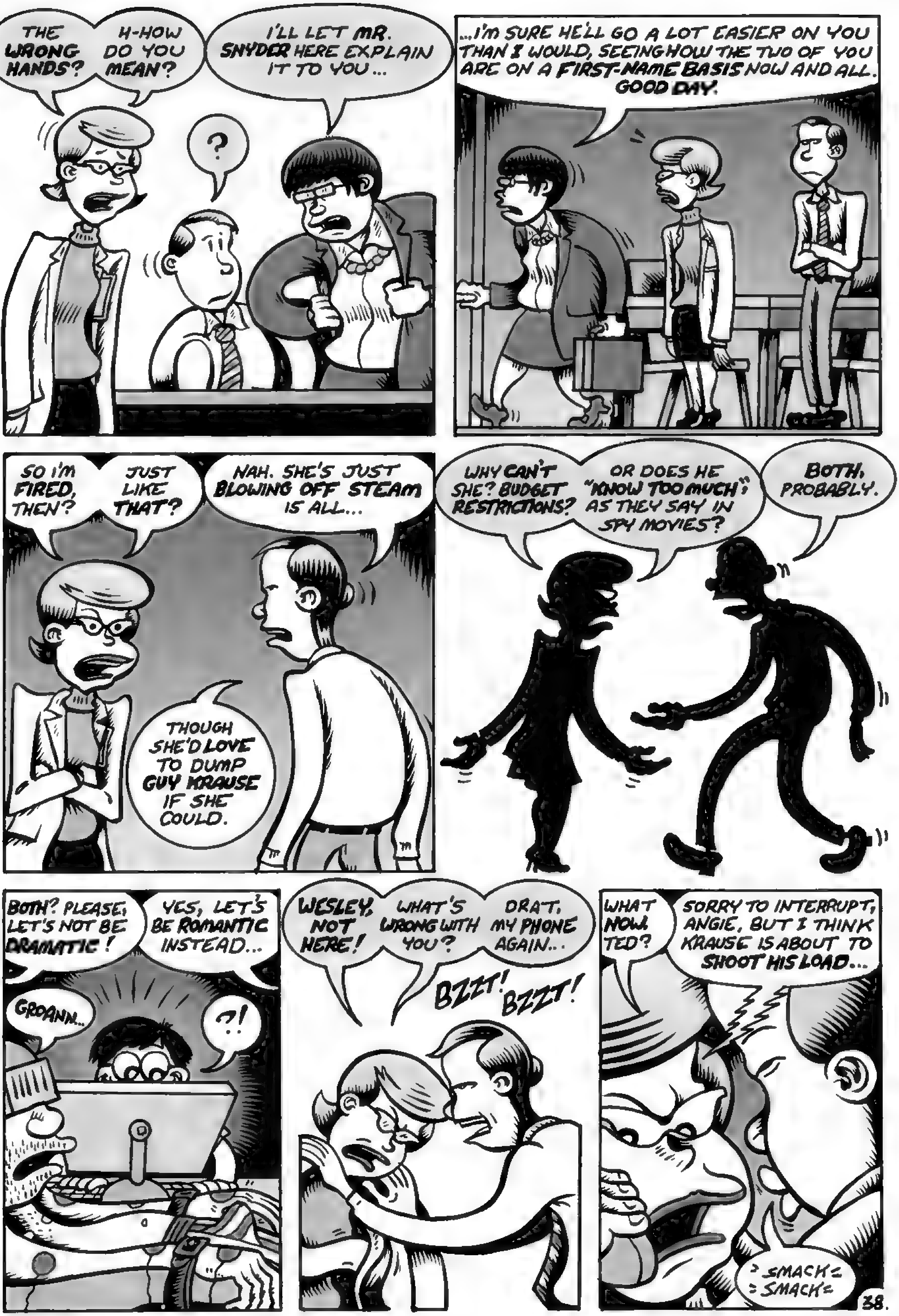
SAY, WHAT'S THIS?
THE SPORTS PAGES...
THIS IS 1985, RIGHT?
THE ROYALS BEAT THE CARDS IN THE WORLD SERIES THAT YEAR, AS I RECALL...
BUCS WIN
HMMM... I JUST THOUGHT OF A WAY I COULD LIVE ON VIRTUAL EASY STREET!
NEWS
I WONDER IF I HAVE ENOUGH MONEY SAVED FOR A TRIP TO VEGAS...
LATER, IN A VIRTUAL VEGAS SPORTS-BETTING PARLOR...
MAN OH MAN, I AM LOADED!
THIS IS TOO EASY!
JUST LOOK AT THOSE ODDS ON THE BEARS WINNING IT ALL THIS SEASON. I'M GONNA MAKE A BUNDLE OFF OF THEM!
YOUR HOTEL SUITE IS READY, MR. KRAUSE.
GREAT! AND SEND ME UP A... UH...
CHAMPAGNE?
NO. A MASSEUSE!
MAKE THAT TWO MASSEUSES. A BLOND AND A BRUNETTE!
YES, SIR.
LET'S SEE... I NOW HAVE ENOUGH TO PAY FOR MY DAD'S OPERATION...
AND PAY OFF MY PARENTS' MORTGAGE...
AND BUY A MANSION FOR MYSELF TO BOOT!
I ALSO SHOULD MEET WITH A STOCKBROKER...

MEANWHILE...
OUR GUINEA PIG CERTAINLY SEEMS TO BE HAVING A GRAND OLD TIME TODAY...
:YAWN:
...I'LL TAKE TEN THOUSAND SHARES OF INTEL STOCK...
NO KIDDING. I WONDER HOW LONG IT'LL BE FOR—
BZZT! BZZT!
?!? I JUST GOT A TEXT MESSAGE...
CRAP... I'M BEING SUMMONED BY THE POWERS THAT BE.
WHEN? NOW?
'FRAID SO...
CALL ME IF ANYTHING GOES AWRY.
B-BUT HE'S GOT TWO BABES COMING TO HIS ROOM!
WHAT'LL I DO IF THINGS GET ...GRAPHIC?
...WHY HELLO THERE, AMBER AND ALEXIS! MAKE YOURSELVES AT HOME...
JUST TRY NOT TO EGG HIM ON IN THAT DIRECTION, OKAY?
OH, TRUST ME, I WON'T!
102
MS. MINOR. PLEASE, HAVE A SEAT.
I HOPE THIS IS IMPORTANT...
I REALLY SHOULDN'T BE LEAVING HIM ALONE IN MID-SESSION.
103

YOUR SUBJECT SEEMS TO BE DOING FINE ALL OF A SUDDEN...
A LITTLE TOO FINE, IF YOU ASK ME.
WHAT THE HELL IS THIS, MS. MINOR?
THAT'S GUY KRAUSE, RELIVING HIS LIFE...
...AS PROMISED.
...OH YEAH... THAT FEELS GOOD...
BUT HE'S WITH A WHORE!
TWO WHORES!
THIS IS NOT WHAT WE HAD IN MIND...
IN FACT, IT'S DIS-GUSTING!
...AH... RIGHT THERE... THAT'S THE SPOT...
THINGS LIKE THIS ARE BOUND TO HAPPEN WHEN WE ALLOW—
I DO NOT RECALL US ALLOWING FOR ANYTHING LIKE THIS!
THIS WAS NEVER INTENDED TO BE ALL FUN AND GAMES, ANGIE.
"FUN AND GAMES"? HAVE YOU BEEN WATCHING WHAT WE'VE GONE THROUGH SO FAR?
WHAT HE'S GONE THROUGH?
YES, BUT—
LOOK AT HIM! HE'S NAKED AND BOUND TO A CHAIR!
HE'S COMPLETELY AT OUR MERCY RIGHT NOW!
HE'S GIVING US HIS FULL CO-OPERATION—
THAT'S ALL WELL AND GOOD, MS. MINOR...
GUH...

THAT SAID, WE'RE NOT HERE TO INDULGE HIM...
THE PURPOSE OF THIS PROJECT IS TO TEST THE LIMITS OF HIS ABILITY TO HANDLE STRESS.
IT IS? SINCE WHEN?!
WESLEY, YOU TOLD ME—
THAT THIS ISN'T AN INTERROGATION DEVICE, WHICH IT ISN'T.
STILL, GAUGING HIS STRESS LEVELS IS OF THE UTMOST INTEREST TO US.
BUT WE ALREADY USED TWO TRAUMATIC EVENTS TODAY:
HIS PARENTS' DIVORCE, AND HIS FATHER'S ILLNESS...
YES, BUT—
BOTH OF WHICH UPSET HIM, YOU MAY HAVE NOTICED!
STILL, YOU WARNED HIM THAT WE'D USE THEM AHEAD OF TIME...
AND THEN YOU TOOK HIM OUT TO LUNCH!
SO?
SO THAT DEFINITELY WASN'T PART OF OUR GAME PLAN...
ESPECIALLY SINCE WE WEREN'T PART OF THAT CONVERSATION...
AND SINCE THEN HE'S INSTANTLY SOLVED ALL HIS PARENTS' PROBLEMS!
THAT WAS A GOOD EXAMPLE OF CONFLICT RESOLUTION, I THOUGHT!
AND NOW WE'RE BEING SUBJECTED TO THIS NONSENSE!
WHAT EXACTLY DID YOU TALK ABOUT AT LUNCH, ANGIE?
...OH YEAH... LIKE THAT...

WE DISCUSSED ESTABLISHING TRUST.
IS THAT WHAT YOU CALL THIS? "TRUST"?
I THINK YOU'VE BEEN CONNED, YOUNG LADY.
"CONNED"? HOW SO?
LOOK, ON PAPER GUY KRAUSE MIGHT BE THE PERFECT CANDIDATE...
THAT BEING SAID, HE'S NO DUMMY EITHER.
AND THAT MAKES HIM LESS THAN PERFECT?
DO YOU WANT A DUMMY?
WELL, ABOUT THIS LUNCH YOU HAD TODAY...
...OH BAY-BEE...
..DID KRAUSE DO OR SAY ANYTHING TO UNDERMINE YOUR AUTH-ORITY?
H-HOW DO YOU MEAN?
LIKE, DID HE ASK YOU A LOT OF PERSONAL QUESTIONS?
I—
AND DID YOU TELL HIM ANYTHING HE COULD USE TO MAKE YOU FEEL OUTMATCHED OR UNQUALIFIED?
WELL, HE DID "BUST OUR BALLS" QUITE A BIT...
UGH! YOU STUPID GIRL!
BUT HE'S A COMEDIAN! THAT'S WHAT HE DOES! YA KNOW?
I'VE HEARD ENOUGH.
THIS PROJECT IS CLEARLY IN THE WRONG HANDS.


THE WRONG HANDS?
H-HOW DO YOU MEAN?
I'LL LET MR. SNYDER HERE EXPLAIN IT TO YOU...
?
...I'M SURE HE'LL GO A LOT EASIER ON YOU THAN I WOULD, SEEING HOW THE TWO OF YOU ARE ON A FIRST-NAME BASIS NOW AND ALL. GOOD DAY.
SO I'M FIRED, THEN?
JUST LIKE THAT?
NAH. SHE'S JUST BLOWING OFF STEAM IS ALL...
THOUGH SHE'D LOVE TO DUMP GUY KRAUSE IF SHE COULD.
WHY CAN'T SHE? BUDGET RESTRICTIONS?
OR DOES HE "KNOW TOO MUCH", AS THEY SAY IN SPY MOVIES?
BOTH, PROBABLY.
BOTH? PLEASE, LET'S NOT BE DRAMATIC!
YES, LET'S BE ROMANTIC INSTEAD...
GROANN...
?!
WESLEY, NOT HERE!
WHAT'S WRONG WITH YOU?
DRAT. MY PHONE AGAIN...
BZZT! BZZT!
WHAT NOW, TED?
SORRY TO INTERRUPT, ANGIE, BUT I THINK KRAUSE IS ABOUT TO SHOOT HIS LOAD...
SMACK SMACK

HE WHAT?
HE REQUESTED A "HAPPY ENDING," AND I OBLIGED HIM...
BUT I WANT IT KNOWN THAT I'M REALLY UN-COMFORTABLE WITH THIS...
?!? ANGIE? WHAT ARE YOU DOING?
YOU WANTED STRESS, YOU GOT IT...
LET'S SEE...
AHH, HERE WE GO...
OOH, YEAH...
CHARACTERS
HELLO, GUY.
?!?
BETH?!?
HELLO, GUY.
BZZT!
WHAT WAS THAT?!
WHY WAS MY EX-WIFE SUDDENLY IN THE ROOM?!
GET ME OUT OF THIS THING!
WHAT JUST HAPPENED?
I'LL EXPLAIN LATER...
I'D BETTER GET BACK IN THERE...

I QUIT!
FREE ME FROM THIS TORTURE DEVICE NOW!
I'M TRYING! STOP WIGGLING SO MUCH!
(ANGIE! WHAT THE HELL?)
S-SORRY, EVERYONE...
THIS IS ALL MY FAULT...
WHERE WERE YOU?!
W-WHERE? HOW DO YOU MEAN? I—
I HEARD YOU COME THROUGH THE DOOR JUST NOW.
OH! YES, I, UH, HAD TO USE THE TOILET...
SOMETHING WENT WRONG WHILE I WAS AWAY...
SOME KIND OF GLITCH...
IT WON'T HAPPEN AGAIN...
A GLITCH, HUH?
THE TIMING OF SAID "GLITCH" SEEMS MIGHTY SUSPICIOUS TO ME...
WHAT WITH MY EX SUDDENLY APPEARING JUST AS I WAS ABOUT TO GET OFF.
OH, GUY, DON'T BE SO—
S'MATTER? WAS I GROSSING YOU OUT?
OR WERE YOU SIMPLY GETTING BORED WITH MY MUNDANE SEX FANTASY?
IT ISN'T LIKE THAT AT ALL! I—
40.

YOU WERE IN THERE, WEREN'T YOU?
THEY TOLD YOU TO DO IT, DIDN'T THEY?
WHO? WHAT? I DON'T—
UH-OH!
YOU THINK I NEVER NOTICED THAT TWO-WAY MIRROR THE MOMENT I FIRST STEPPED INTO THIS ROOM?
LOOK, IF THAT WINDOW BOTHERS YOU WE COULD—
THE WINDOW ITSELF DOESN'T BOTHER ME...
IN FACT I'M USED TO BEING "FOCUS GROUPED" BY INVISIBLE STRANGERS...
WHAT DOES BOTHER ME IS YOUR NEVER MENTIONING IT.
I...
OH, NOW YOU'RE BEING PARANOID!
THERE'S NO ONE WATCHING US FROM THE NEXT ROOM!
I'LL EVEN PROVE IT TO YOU IF YOU'D LIKE!
THAT ISN'T THE POINT.
WHAT IS THE POINT, THEN?
WHAT IS SHE DOING?
I THOUGHT WE ESTABLISHED A LEVEL OF TRUST TODAY...
WE DID!
ONLY THEN YOU TOTALLY FUCKED WITH ME!
I DID NOT!
YOU DID! ADMIT IT!
WHATEVER UNDERSTANDING WE REACHED EARLIER TODAY OBVIOUSLY DIDN'T SIT WELL WITH WHOEVER IS MONITORING THIS.
THAT ISN'T TRUE, GUY.
SHIT.

WHAT-EVER...
EITHER WAY, IT'S OBVIOUS I'M NOT THE SORT OF PERSON YOU WANT FOR THIS PROJECT.
BUT YOU ARE, GUY!
NO, I'M NOT.
YOU NEED SOMEONE MORE PASSIVE; MORE SUGGESTIBLE...
SOMEONE STUPIDER THAN ME.
SO WHAT ARE YOU SAYING?
THAT YOU QUIT?
AGAIN?
YOU'LL WIND UP FIRING ME EVENTUALLY.
MIGHT AS WELL GET IT OVER WITH NOW.
WE HAVE A CONTRACT—
I DON'T RECALL THE CONTRACT SAYING I AGREED TO BE TORTURED!
OH, FOR GOOD-NESS—
YOU'D BETTER PRAY I DON'T SUE YOU!
SUE?!
I'D LOVE TO SEE YOU TRY TO CONVINCE A JUDGE THAT WHAT WE'VE DONE CONSTITUTES "TORTURE"!
YEAH. WELL, DON'T TEMPT ME.
YEAH, ANGE! DON'T TEMPT HIM!
FINE! QUIT!
SEE IF I CARE!
SLAM

ONE MINUTE LATER...
ANGIE! WHAT THE HELL!?
SPARE ME, WESLEY!
I DON'T WANT TO HEAR IT!
?!?
YOU WERE GOING TO PROVE NO ONE WAS IN THE NEXT ROOM?
I WAS IN THE NEXT ROOM!
IT'S CALLED BLUFFING, WESLEY. AND IT WORKED, DIDN'T IT?
HELLO? I, UH...
OH, TED, THIS IS WESLEY SNYDER.
WES, TED.
OH, HEY! YOU'RE DOING A GREAT JOB, KIDDO.
THANKS, ONLY I DON'T THINK WE WERE SUPPOSED TO MEET...
WERE WE?
OH, YES, THAT'S RIGHT, WE WEREN'T.
IN THAT CASE I THINK I'LL, UH, EXCUSE MYSELF...
NICE TO MEET YOU...
OR NOT, HEH HEH!
I WONDER IF I SHOULD START LOOKING FOR A NEW JOB.
YOU NEED TO FIX THIS, ANGE.
HOW?
AND WHY, FOR THAT MATTER?
KRAUSE IS RIGHT. HE ISN'T THE RIGHT PERSON FOR THIS JOB...
AND WHAT IF HE DOES SUE? I WOULDN'T BLAME HIM IF HE DID!
HE FREED US FROM ALL LIABILITY WHEN HE SIGNED THE CONTRACT.
43.

HURRAY FOR US...
SO NOW WHAT?
YOU'RE GETTING HIM BACK HERE IS WHAT.
I DON'T CARE HOW.
JUST DO IT.
I DON'T KNOW HOW TO "JUST DO IT"!
MY MIND IS A BLANK!
(MAYBE IF YOU USE YOUR FEMININE WILES)...
WESLEY! YOU OF ALL PEOPLE!
IT WAS JUST A SUGGESTION!
PARDON ME FOR TRYING TO HELP!
IT WOULDN'T WORK ANYWAY. HE MUST HATE ME AT THIS POINT.
SO JUST MAKE UP SOME BULL-SHIT STORY...
THAT NEVER WORKS EITHER...
I SAY WE DO THE OPPOSITE AND COME CLEAN ABOUT EVERY-THING...
WHAT?
NO!
OUT OF THE QUESTION!
PERHAPS IF YOU MET WITH HIM YOU COULD—
ABSOLUTELY NOT! HAVE YOU LOST YOUR MIND, WOMAN?
WE'LL JUST KEEP DOING WHAT WE HAVE BEEN DOING—SABOTAGING HIS CAREER...
WE ALREADY HAVE RUINED HIS CAREER!
WHAT MORE DAMAGE CAN WE DO?
OH, YOU'D BE SURPRISED.
NOW IF YOU'LL EXCUSE ME, I'VE GOTTA REPORT BACK TO THE OLD BATTLE-AX ...
BUT—
I'LL SEE YOU TONIGHT.
:SIGH:...
I GUESS IT'S OFFICIAL...
I'M A MONSTER.

END OF PART 2.

RESET™

SEND YOUR FAN ART AND LETTERS TO RESET@DARKHORSE.COM!

NEXT ISSUE: Guy immerses himself in the Reset project, returning to the "monsters" who are experimenting on him to explore the original open-world game of *his own imagination*! However, the unhinged team running the experiments needs Guy to tone down on the fun and get back to dealing with his life issues instead of sexual fantasies—but will Guy comply? See you in thirty days!

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DARK HORSE
MAY 2012

HORSEPOWER

It feels like all I do these days is think about the end of the world. And, weirdly, get inspired by it. It gives me the urge to make new stuff. *The Massive*, in this case.

Just like with my previous series *DMZ*, I am destined to get the question "Where did the idea for *The Massive* come from?" in every interview for years and years to come. And just like with *DMZ*, I will never have the perfect answer. It's always a blend of a thousand different sources, pop-culture references, articles I saw, books I read, the random connections that happen in the back of your brain when you sleep. Or, more likely in my case, trucking my kids around the neighborhood. Thinking about the end of the world while watching them run like maniacs all over the local playground. So why? Why do I find this so compelling? Why am I writing *The Massive*, and why do I have a half dozen other pitches on my hard drive all dealing with "end of the world" themes?

I should explain something about *The Massive*. Yeah, it is about the end of the world, in a way. I call it a "postcrash" story, meaning a societal crash, an environmental crash. Economic catastrophe, a total meltdown across the spectrum. Huge natural disasters, and plenty of man-made ones as well. The planet remains, and what has ended is society as we know it now. Millions are dead, but billions still remain, and so the story is really more of a "what happens after the end of the world" story, and stories like that are always shot through with themes of hope and rebirth, of adventure and discovery. *The Massive* is no exception. The earth persists, and so mankind must adapt. The crew of the direct-action conservationist ships the *Kapital* and the *Massive*, hardcore environmentalists to a person, are in the unique position of having ridden out the worst of the crash in the middle of the ocean, entirely on their own, and as society implodes on land, as international borders and boundaries are made irrelevant, as first-world nations are reduced to third world, as violence and instability become the norm, they sail the oceans and try to figure out their next step. But what *is* the next step for a crew of die-hard environmentalists who, in the end, were not able to stop the end of the world?

The story focuses on the crew of the *Kapital*. Its captain and the founder of the organization, Callum Israel, is an older man, an ex-mercenary turned "tree-hugger" (you'll see that term expand beyond its stereotype). His partners, the enigmatic student from Zimbabwe known as Mary and the former Tamil Tiger Mag Negendra, make up the immediate cast of characters—a real blend of cultures and experiences. This is not a book about Americans, or even told from an American perspective (a tough habit to break, after more than six years writing *DMZ*!). This is a global book, in attitude, in point of view, and in terms of setting and location. The story will literally span the globe, the first story arc taking place in the frigid North Pacific waters that separate the Kamchatka Peninsula and the Aleutian Islands chain. The crash has happened, the *Massive* is out of contact and adrift somewhere out there, and the crew of the *Kapital* is struggling to make sense of it all while searching for their lost friends.

The Massive is a monthly comic, expertly executed by Kristian Donaldson and Dave Stewart, overseen by Sierra Hahn and Jim Gibbons, and comes in at twenty-two pages per month. I'm making some changes to how I produce monthly comics, ditching the more traditional five- or six-issue story arcs in favor of three-issue arcs, but with no less story per arc. *The Massive* is a dense read, a smart story with gorgeous art, set against a global crisis that is exciting, topical, relatable, and more than a little scary. It is, right now, the absolute best comic I am capable of creating and writing. I'm going all in. That's the deal I'm making with my readers: you invest in this series and know we'll be giving it everything we got. I have a lot of story to tell here, and I plan on seeing it through to the end.

There's that word again, "end." I have a family, a wife, and two kids. I don't want the world to end. But if it does, I hope there are people like Callum, Mary, and Mag helping to show the way to a new world, one where we'll have learned from the mistakes of the past.

Brian Wood

DARK HORSE HEROES!

Pat Callahan, owner of Cave Comics in Newtown, CT, has been running his store out of a remodeled 120-year-old train station for 22 years. His VPs of public relations, two basset hounds named Elektra and Kirby, are at the store every day—before them, he was accompanied by their relatives, Hoover and Flash! Happy returning customers are proof that Pat's store has become an important touchstone in many childhoods.

Raised in the shantytowns of Southeast Asia, **Callum Israel** worked around ships prior to finding black-ops employment with a military contractor. But that was before he found his true calling and before disaster scoured the globe. Now, as the captain of the *Kapital*, in search of his sister ship, the *Massive*, Callum must deal with the dilemma of what it means to be an environmentalist after the world's already ended.

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